



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana  
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## IM Weekly Highlights



- IM held outreach meetings with Meagher County officials and the Chippewa Cree Tribal Council.
- Office of Emergency Communications technical experts met with City of Billings personnel and IM and PSSB representatives on Fri., Feb. 5 to discuss radio system needs assessment results and provide direction on future technical assistance needs.
- The IM Funding Sub-Committee held its first meeting in Billings on Tues., Feb. 2.
- Roger Smith, IM Radio System Administrator, continues to work with Northern Tier jurisdictions to complete fleet mapping and code plug development.

## Big Sky 11 Consortium on Task

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

The Thurs., Jan. 28 meeting of the Big Sky 11 Consortium meeting in Billings began with Mike Linder's report on IM Technical Committee activities regarding concrete standards and generator fuels. He also brought the group up to date on local construction progress. Considerable discussion took place about alternative options on the Dunn Mountain site, since a coal mining company will be mining underneath it, causing subsidence problems.

Sheriff Floyd Fisher, Project Director, reported on the most recent IM Project Directors (IMPD) meeting, noting that the group has adopted an abbreviated meeting schedule for itself and consortia. The Big Sky 11 Consortium decided to continue having monthly meetings in view of upcoming construction activities, even though participants will not be able to have travel to the meetings be reimbursed each month. Options will be pursued to offer reliable telephone conferencing.

He also reported on the Communications Systems Planner position, (visit: [http://interop.mt.gov/staffing\\_sub-committee.mcp](http://interop.mt.gov/staffing_sub-committee.mcp) for

more information) and said that he is serving on the new IM Audit Committee. Members expressed interest in the new IM video, suggested that it be posted to the web site, and asked to be notified when it has been. Copies of the signed bylaws also were distributed to members.

Jurisdiction reports were given. Bobbi Hanson, Wheatland County, reported on a generator failure at the Cooney site. Bruce Brown, FBI, reported on his work to interconnect equipment along the Northern Tier. Carole Raymond, Rosebud County, indicated that new digital radios have been installed throughout the county, and some ambulances will now have the ability to perform encrypted digital communications. Frank Odermann, Billings Fire, provided information on recent City Council discussions on the City of Billings Needs Assessment.

Rick Allen, Salvation Army representative, described the capabilities of a newly acquired regional response vehicle, which can provide up to 3200 meals per day during emergency situations. The vehicle will be a part of the City of Laurel's Operation Coyote exercise in May.

The next Big Sky Consortium meeting is scheduled for Thurs., Feb. 25 at 8:30 am for the technical committee meeting and 10:00 am for the consortium meeting at the Yellowstone County Fire Station, 2305 8th Ave. N. in Billings.

## Productive SIEC Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Members of Montana's Governor-appointed Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) primarily listened and learned at their Jan. 27 meeting in Helena. But, they also provided knowledgeable opinions.

Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, and Ian Marquand, IM Public Affairs and Outreach Consultant, gave an IM Project status report as well as an update on outreach efforts and interoperability issues related to the fire community. Members provided advice and direction.

Garrett Fawaz, Department of Corrections and State Agency Radio Task Force Chair,

## HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

provided an update on the group's progress, noting that resources needed to meet the federal narrowband deadline will need to be a part of 2011 legislative funding. Carl Hotvedt reported on congressional appropriations requests.

The next SIEC meeting is planned for April at a date and location to be announced.

### Rocky Boy's Meeting Represents 43<sup>rd</sup> IM Outreach Meeting

By Scott Bradford [sbradford@mt.gov](mailto:sbradford@mt.gov)

Interoperability Montana (IM) and Public Safety Services Bureau representatives met with members of the Chippewa Cree Tribal Council at the Rocky Boy's Reservation on Thurs., Feb. 4. This meeting represented the 43<sup>rd</sup> outreach meeting IM has conducted over the past seven months and completed presentations to Montana Tribal Nations.

IM discussed progress on the Northern Tier and other work that is being completed, along with possible future use of the Centennial Mountain site located on tribal land. The Council voted to create a working group to work directly with the IM on cooperation and use issues. This working group will then present ideas to the Council for future consideration.

To learn more about the IM Outreach effort or to view the report, visit these links:

- [http://interop.mt.gov/im\\_outreach\\_meetings.mcpx](http://interop.mt.gov/im_outreach_meetings.mcpx)
- [http://interop.mt.gov/content/docs/Outreach\\_and Education/IM\\_2009\\_Outreach\\_Report-Full.pdf](http://interop.mt.gov/content/docs/Outreach_and_Education/IM_2009_Outreach_Report-Full.pdf)

### MDT Consortium Learns about New Technology

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

More than 20 individuals attended the Thurs., Feb. 4 meeting of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium meeting in Helena to listen to three presentations. Mike Collins, Panasonic Area Sales Manager gave two in-depth talks about Panasonic "Toughbook" technology, operational efficiencies and durability tests. He also explained the features of Panasonic's Mobile Digital Video System. Free pilot programs are available.

Clifton Weeks, NetMotion Wireless Territory Account Executive, explained how his company's Mobility XE product helps police and fire department personnel use laptops more reliably in the field, particularly in wide geographic areas with inconsistent wireless data coverage. The software helps to manage disconnects, jitters and latency issues to improve productivity. For more information about Gallatin County's use of this technology, please visit this link: <http://communication-solutions.tmcnet.com/topics/business-continuity/articles/70605-gallat-county-selects-netmotion-wireless.htm>. Net-Motion also offers free product trials.

Members discussed long-term MDT goals, setting standards, and a needs assessment. Members also discussed COPS grant purchases, and decided to take advantage of pricing discounts to purchase Panasonic CF-30 Toughbooks and Mobility XE software.

Meeting minutes are regularly posted to the MDT Consortium website, which is located at: <http://interop.mt.gov/mdtc.mcpx>. The next MDT meeting is scheduled for Wed., March 31 in Bozeman at a time and location to be announced.

### Upcoming Meetings

- **Thurs., Feb. 11 - (Please Note: This meeting was rescheduled from last week)**  
Northern Tier  
Havre • 9:00 am - noon  
Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St.
- **Wed., Feb. 17**  
Funding Sub-Committee Meeting  
Billings • 1:00 pm  
Billings Police Dept. Training Center  
4810 Midland Rd.
- **Thurs., Feb. 18**  
I-15/90 Corridor Consortium  
Butte • 10:00 am  
Butte Chamber of Commerce  
1000 George St.
- **Sun., Feb 21**  
MACo Interoperability Committee  
Great Falls • 7:00 pm  
Best Western Heritage Inn  
1700 Fox Farm Road